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The Wm. T. Stead Memorial Center

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533 Grant Place,  
CHICAGO, ILL.

SEPT. LESSON SHEET  
PART II  
SEPTEMBER, 1919

Dear Fellow  
Class Member:

The accompanying lesson is complete. It is so much to the point, I am going to ask you only to read one reference in "God's World," and that is PART XV in its entirety--the chapter on Reincarnation.

Our Teachers never have asked us to accept things blindly. They never have brought us any Teachings except to stimulate our own thoughts. We must exercise our minds, and study, and if we do not arrive at our conclusions immediately, we have done nothing wrong. Some things we learn quickly, and others slowly.

Our Teachers do not expect the impossible of us.

To illustrate, we may say that here is a physician--a medical doctor. He is diagnosing a case. He tells us the result of his diagnosis, and wishing to help us, he explains how he has arrived at his conclusion. We have made up our minds that the patient has heart disease, because his mother and grandmother passed out through the same cause. We say, "Oh, doctor, but this man inherited heart disease, and we recall that his mother and his grandmother suffered the same as he."

But the doctor says, "It is kidney trouble," and forthwith he gives us his reasons. Our minds are set on heart disease, and we would grieve much more over the patient's passing if we felt that he had not been true to traditions.

Time was when that physician knew no more about the body than we know. He studied and he practised, and that study and practice gave him knowledge which we do not possess. Were this not true, we would not call him in to see a patient.

And so it is with the law: Not understanding the statutes or legal practice, we may try a case in our minds, and have a decision prepared--which would not be endorsed by any good lawyer on earth. We are ignorant of the statutes, and yet we say that we know how a case should be decided, and judges often shake their heads and wonder why humanity can be so ignorant.

It harms none of us to be shown that we are not so very wise after all, and preferring to use myself as an example, so that no other person's feelings can be injured, I shall explain just what I have in mind:

I have been a writer for twenty-five years. When I was seventeen, I was working on a country newspaper, and acting as correspondent for metropolitan newspapers. I made a living, and perhaps a very good one, considering all things. As time passed, I got out into the world and knew what it meant to go hungry and to be sat upon--all of which I needed.

Struggling along with the most uncertain of all things, language, I became an editorial writer, and a sporting writer, and an editor of ill-favored magazines, and in a limited way, a story writer.

My stories were not very good. I thought they were, but I can see now that they were just stepping stones, and that I was not destined to be a

Rex Beach. I sold them for small sums, to several of the popular magazines, and sold most of those which I wrote. I wrote features for a good many newspapers, and did syndicate writing for George Matthew Adams and the Associated Newspapers. But my success, so far as I have realized success, was in commercial writing, and what editors thought of Rex Beach and others, sales managers thought of me. That was where I belonged, so far as I could see at the time.

I planned and wrote many mail-order campaigns that were successful. And through studying results carefully, I felt that I had a right to say that I knew what would be likely to happen when certain things were done. In other words, I believed that I had discovered the underlying law--but I assure you that there was more lying than law about it, because I was falsifying to myself in what I fancied was my wisdom.

Finally came this Big Work, and why should I not feel confident in performing my part of this service? Had I not a quarter-of-a-century of writing experience back of me? Had I not had millions of words in print? But, alas, there is a difference between words and wisdom!

And so it was not long before I discovered that all my old rules did not apply. The results changed. What I felt certain would be the result, was not the result at all. When I mailed our first "Table-top" circular, while it brought wonderful results, it did something outside of my calculations: It brought up the sales of "God's World" more than any other follow-up I had sent out on that book, and yet it was not intended or planned as a follow-up on "God's World."

When I mailed our second "Table-top" circular, it acted as a follow-up on the lessons!

What I planned and what happened, were different, and the knowledge I thought I possessed, was not the knowledge I had believed it to be.

And so, I talked to the Guides about it and said, "This is not regular. As they say in common parlance, it is contrary to Hoyle. What I plan and what happens, upset all my experience."

And they laughed and replied, "You supply the vehicle, but we direct its course."

Now, friends, had I stopped there and pouted about it, and said that experience is all a joke, that would have been of no avail. I was going to school again, and what I was learning is expressed as follows:

The spirit-world was teaching me that my experience was necessary, but that I must continue to learn. I was being taught to have confidence in what the unseen world was doing, and to know that my efforts and my sincerity were needed in order to supply the conditions essential for help to be given to me.

But I find that results have not been disorderly, but well governed--far better than human experience and ability would manage them. As I look back through these first eight months since we started our publishing department, I can see that there is a beautiful pattern, a marvelous mosaic, not of my making at all. I understand that our work is growing as the spirit-world wishes it to grow, and I find that many of my ideas and plans were but incubating, to hatch into a species that was strange to me.

Thus, I am getting over some of the habits of the professional writers, who believe that what they have learned is very wonderful and beyond dispute! I see that as I have greater faith in my loved ones across-the-way, they will reward my efforts not by appeasing my hunger of vanity, but by doing that which is right and best.

If we learn that there is nothing the spirit-world can not do provided we supply the conditions, we shall save no end of worry. We worry chiefly because we think that we are wise, and we fret if God does not place

His O.K. on our poor little ideas.

So I know that I must continue to learn throughout eternity, and the novelty of that knowledge is far more inspiring than anything else I ever learned.

And something else I have learned, also: YOU are just as much part of this work as I am, or as Mrs. Cook, or those who are in our office and help us carry on the human part of this work. YOU are helping supply the conditions for the growth of this movement, and without your interest, your generous thoughts and your sincerity, we couldn't get along very rapidly.

The subject of reincarnation is not the only stumbling-block in some mortal lives. We think we have mastered something, about which we scarcely understand the rudiments. When we believe that we are wise, we are likely to step high and keep our eyes out of focus with the sidewalk, and thereby invite some sudden falls and bad bumps!

This month's lesson contains a wealth of thought other than what is told to us about reincarnation. Study it and you will find its gems of information and guidance shining brightly for you. Pass it over lightly, and the light of its full, great truth will not reach you.

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So many questions have been mailed recently, it will be several issues before they are all answered, and in the meantime, more questions continue to come. Have patience, please, and remember that all of these questions will be taken up in their own good time.

In place of the sheet for questions, I am mailing herewith the fourth blank form pertaining to the Organization work. I could not mail the four forms with "How to Organize Spiritualistic Centers" (and your copy should have reached you), without paying several times the postage. So I enclose it with this lesson.

And now, relative to that booklet on Organization, you will give it your thought? We must think about organizing, and if the work can not be done right now, preserve that book of instructions and later on the way may open, so that you may form a small center that will grow into a large center.

Frequently, we receive letters that are about like this: "If you will send us a good voice medium, we will see that he or she is compensated. Give us the medium and we can organize."

Experience says that this is not true. Mediums seldom have organizing power, and become the helpless victims of circumstance. Their gift is so contrary to the practical, they do not know how to organize. Do not start your meal by demanding the dessert. Eat the soup and the other food, and finish with the dessert.

When you have organized and have a membership sufficient, we can send you a medium, but perhaps not a voice medium. You must be glad to have a good medium, without demanding the kind of mediumship that gifted man or woman will bring to you. I am assuming merely that you have no medium now.

Unless you organize, it is unwise to send you a medium. Without organization, there is no centralized responsibility, and we are going to stand by mediums by supplying them with the right conditions. Our own medium has had such a hard lot of it, and so many others have experienced similar abuse, we are not going to repeat the wrong conditions that must bring the wrong thing always.

Keep before you the truth that the Teachers have brought to us in "God's World:" Spiritualism must be a religion of the heart and the home. Then see how this idea is carried out in our plan of organization!

The trail may be long and the going slow and hard, but eventually,

friends, there must be a religion that depends not at all on a church or a temple, but that carries its precepts into whatever we do. I do not mean that we are going to measure up to every demand, but we are going to adopt methods that will be more helpful in our attempt to live as we believe.

Organizing under the plan that has been placed before you, it is possible for us to set into motion a great constructive force that will grow in importance and helpfulness as time passes. We start with our excavation, and then we build our foundation, and the superstructure will be beautiful and enduring only in harmony with the ground-work that we performed!

We can not accomplish all things today. We can start today. We can make a little effort as time passes, and after a period, we shall find our efforts bearing fruit. In this organization work, we do not expect to upset all of the precedents in life. It is better to grow correctly than to grow rapidly and wrong.

You and I are students, and we are learning a little each day, only as we put forth the effort. We shall make many mistakes. That is one way to learn. We shall change some of our ideas. That is another sign of progress. But if we start right and stick to it, we shall have something very wonderful and very beautiful to show for our efforts, before we have quit this material realm.

If you find just ONE friend in several months to join you in this study, you have added to the foundation. So think of EACH addition rather than plunging right in and finding many. It is important, in a book-keeper's life, to account for every penny in his trial balance. It must be important in our work to think of EACH person we can reach. The world's vast population consists only of INDIVIDUALS.

No matter what you believe or do not believe, let us keep close together. After all, we are learning just a little, but if we continue to learn a little for countless ages, sometime, somewhere in spirit, we shall possess the wisdom we may have believed was ours here.

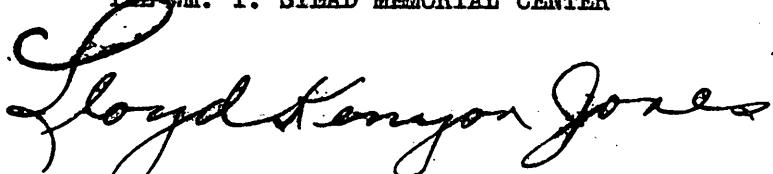
With kindest wishes, and giving you my assurance that a letter from you is welcome always, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

LKJ-LI6

President,  
THE WM. T. STEAD MEMORIAL CENTER

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# Questions and Answers

## The Wm. T. Stead Memorial Center Home Study Course

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While each of you will have questions in which, naturally, you are interested deeply, do not forget that the questions asked by others also carry their lessons.

If you have questions to ask that express doubt, do not hesitate to ask them. We do not regard any question sent to this department as flippant. Often, when one nurses a doubt, the expression of that doubt may seem to be flippant, but it is better by far to express it than to leave it unsaid. We do not depend upon conditions the same as Mrs. Cook would in giving messages.

The members of this Class are students. They are not all Spiritualists. They have open minds and are willing to consider the statements placed before them. They come to this classroom of Questions and Answers as students, and that is all we expect of them. Any person who is willing to study, is going to learn, and we do not learn always through agreeing with everything. We learn through bringing out our doubts, and by weighing the explanations that are given to us.

Members of this Class include, besides Spiritualists, members of many other religious bodies, and some who profess no religion. They all find a tolerance in these Teachings that surely must encourage them to come with their questions.

If you do not believe some of these answers, feel free to state your doubt. Maybe that expression of your own doubt will help others to understand, while giving you new food for thought.

We recognize the spirit of fairness that prevails among the members of this class, and we appreciate that spirit. Through this willingness to enter an arena of thought, where the doubter will be heard with the same welcome extended to the believer, we are all instrumental in producing a document that must prove of great value to students.

Each month brings many new angles of thought. Except as this Question-and-Answer sheet reveals something that must help us think, of what value would it be? We may read much, but until we THINK for ourselves, we have not learned. God gave us brains not solely to agree with everything we read or hear, but to exercise in study, in question, in analysis.

Many questions remain unanswered. They will be taken up in the order in which they are received, so if your questions do not appear in this issue, do not feel discouraged. They will be along in some subsequent issue.

Following is the current month's offering of Questions, with their Answers:

**Question**—Do people who have suffered hardships seem to be more advanced in mediumistic powers than those whose lives have run smoothly?

**Answer**—We can not say that this is true, but the fact remains that as soon as a person begins to give evidence of mediumistic powers, many hardships and obstacles appear. When humanity has progressed far enough, then mediums will be able to live as tranquil lives as those who are not mediumistic.

**Question**—There are medicines on sale near Buffalo that have helped many thousands of people, and these medicines are made by a medium. Why is it that these things are not more widely known? Are there many mediums of this kind?

**Answer**—Every remedy that is used by mortals has come as an inspiration from spirit. Medicine is a form of education. Its purpose is to establish a medium within the body that will permit the vibrations to harmonize, because in any disease there is a disturbance of vibrations, and medicine is a chemical agent in helping stabilize this vibration. When people learn more about the healing forces of spirit, they will find that they do not have to

depend so much upon these material remedial agents.

**Question**—Why do you not call more attention to the two helpful books you mention, giving the price, so that people can order them, meaning "The Development of Mediumship" and "Healing Forces"?

**Answer**—These two "Table-top" volumes are sold under a special price to our friends, meaning those who patronize the Center regularly, at the rate of one dollar postpaid for both volumes or 75 cents for either. We thought that everybody who had received the Oriental Lessons had also received our circulars relative to our "Table-top" treatises. Many of our friends send in orders for these and our other "Table-top" volumes so as to make presents of them to their friends.

**Question**—Just how do we know when we are being aided by our spirit friends, especially when we debate and are so sorely tried in attempting to arrive at the right decision?

**Answer**—At all times we should have confidence in our loved ones in spirit. But we must remember

that we alone always must make the effort. If we did not exercise our minds in debating problems, we could not progress, we could not learn. Exercise of thought, like exercise of muscles, is necessary for a healthy condition.

**Question**—Is it not better for husband and wife to separate, especially if there is lack of interest and harmony and the husband will not "play fair?"

**Answer**—We can not offer advice that would lead to the breaking up of any home. We all realize that there are conditions in home life that become intolerable. But at the same time these are problems that the individual must solve. They are part of individual experience. If each person would call upon God and the spirit-world, undoubtedly the correct decision would be arrived at—if not immediately, at least in time.

**Question**—I can always get messages on the ouija-board alone. And I also can take a pencil and write very quickly. But how do I know that the spirit forces are doing the writing? I do not feel them.

**Answer**—In automatic writings and ouija-board messages, the question of their source can be answered only by their correctness. In a condition of over-enthusiasm, people will produce the writings themselves without knowing it. In genuine automatic writing, the individual has absolutely no control of his hand. He sees it move, but it may as well be the hand of another person so far as his own volition and force are concerned.

**Question**—Do the teachers in spirit answer these questions?

**Answer**—These questions are answered by the teachers in spirit. Many of these subjects have been taken up prior to the receipt of the questions, therefore it is not necessary to bring up the same questions again upon entering the seance-room. All new points upon which the teachings have not been received are taken up as they appear and are answered by the teachers. We have a large amount of material on hand, consisting of transcripts of shorthand notes, and this material is utilized in the answering of these questions. But it has come from the teachers. We have a large quantity of material that has not been used in our books or in the questions and answers, and to this material additions are being made constantly. These questions and answers, however, bring out many new points, and every new point is taken up with our teachers.

**Question**—Can you tell us who Patience Worth was, when and where she lived? She does not tell us that in her book. She speaks as though she were an old spirit.

**Answer**—Perhaps Patience Worth is a spirit-name that has been adopted. Very often spirits who bring messages to mortals do not care to make their identities known, because, to them, identity means nothing and the truth means everything. Very likely Patience Worth wished to focus all interest in the message she brought and not dissipate that interest by a biographical sketch of herself. Our own guides tell us that they know Patience Worth very well, but thus far they have never discussed her identity with us.

**Question**—We are told that there are bad mediums, and that we must be careful or they might take the power away from the good mediums. If this is so, where do these bad mediums get their power?

**Answer**—There are mediums of small development. But a medium is an instrument, and it is

not a question of goodness or badness, but of instrumentality. A medium of low intellect is likely to attract undeveloped spirits, but it is absolutely impossible for any person to literally injure another. There may be temporary harm worked by others, but it must come back to them. The law of compensation, and its expression in the law of attraction, will answer your question fully.

**Question**—Can spirits see the spirits of animals?

**Answer**—Yes, they can see the spirits of animals, when they are in the lower spirit-planes. A few of these animals, that we know as pets, are permitted to stay in the third sphere for years, sometimes, before they are reincarnated. The lower the form of animal-life, the more rapid the reincarnation. Also, the older the human spirit, the earlier it can be reincarnated. But this latter form of reincarnation is a sign of strength and really a matter of choice. Such reincarnations are for the purpose of doing an important earth-work.

**Question**—You mention an incident in the lessons of a person appearing at a seance and saying that he was very sorry that he took his own life, and that he felt so much better after being told that he was not responsible. Why could he not have read your thoughts instead of waiting to be told in words?

**Answer**—In the seance-room, this spirit came back into material vibrations. For the first time since he had taken his life, he was enabled to return to the plane of vibrations of our material world. He came back into intimate contact with the world he had left. And it was not the words that comforted him, but it was the fact that during those few minutes he was as much a flesh-and-blood being as he had ever been. It is this contact with the material world that places these discarnate spirits in a condition peculiar to the earth-world, which is equivalent to taking up the broken threads of earth-life. There is the satisfaction of being able to actually converse with somebody of the earth, which is more satisfying than all of the telepathic communications that could be received. If you had done something that was wrong, and immediately had left the community, no matter how many letters you might receive telling you of forgiveness, it would never seem as whole-souled and substantial as though you returned to the place where you had committed the wrong act and in the very environments of those conditions had been forgiven. People do not change very much upon entering spirit, and the psychology of those on the other side is much like our psychology.

**Question**—Is the planet Mars inhabited? What do the spirits say about the markings that resemble canals?

**Answer**—We are told that the planet Mars is inhabited by spirits and not by mortals, and that the markings that are observed are due to magnetic currents affecting the atmospheric conditions, or, in other words, the "aura" of the planet.

**Question**—We have had many wrong statements made in some of the messages that we received through automatic writings, such as a spirit giving the wrong name and urging us to give a message to somebody else, which messages were found to be false. What is the cause of this?

**Answer**—It is a very strange conceit that people who suddenly decide that they are going to get automatic writings, will blame all of the errors on the spirit-world, and perhaps no spirit in the universe, except the spirit of the person who is trying

to get the writings, is responsible for the wrong statements. Most of the criticisms offered against Spiritualism are based on the results secured by people who are just developing. Remember that in automatic writing, you have no power over your hand. Your hand itself is controlled, and you merely see it move. You would get the same results if you were blindfolded or in the dark. In proof of this, if you have an opportunity at any time of witnessing independent slate-writing, you would realize that the messages coming through from the other side are clear and to the point. Never blame the spirit world for errors that are produced purely by human agency. We have had people come to the Center who have said that they received automatic writings and ouija-board messages from their friends, and when they talked to their friends, they were told that they had positively nothing to do with those messages, that they were purely the product of mortal mind. And yet we have had people leave the seance-room, where they could actually talk to their loved ones on the other side, and place more dependence upon the ouija-board or automatic writings. This is because nearly every human being likes to pride himself on being the most powerful and the most highly cultivated.

**Question**—At what time does the spirit enter the body at birth?

**Answer**—We have touched upon this at length in previous lesson. The connection is made at the moment of conception, and the spirit enters the body at the moment of birth. This is true even in premature births. It is true of the still-born, although the process has been merely one of contact, and the spirit leaves immediately and enters the new spirit-body and grows up on the other side from baby-hood.

**Question**—Do we sometimes attract spirits of different spheres whose guidance would bring opposing influences?

**Answer**—The spirit-world, in guidance, acts as a unit. The law of attraction would not attract opposing influences. If you pressed down the loud pedal of the piano and struck any single key, as the notes were played you would hear the vibration from strings that harmonize with the key that was struck. Thus you find the law of attraction working even in sound waves. It works out in everything.

**Question**—I was born in Russia and did not have much education. What I have, I learned through my own efforts. Throughout Russia, the peasant people do not have much opportunity for education. Where will all of these people be on the spirit-side of life?

**Answer**—While these people may be lacking in earth-education, many of them may be far advanced in spiritual development. Some of the people we call ignorant in this world have great spirituality and go to much higher spheres than many whom we call educated.

**Question**—I am capable of building machines, blue-prints, etc. After I have been shown a thing once or twice, I learn quickly. But I wish to secure spiritual experience. I forget spiritual things so easily.

**Answer**—You may forget the actual wording of the lessons, but you must be absorbing a good deal of the truth of the lessons or you would not be able to write such intelligent questions. The very fact that you have analyzed the difference between your ability and your work, and of memor-

izing these lessons, proves that you are thinking and searching. That is advancing.

**Question**—I know that to each of us is given some work to do, and I should like to know the work that God has given me in His vineyard?

**Answer**—Very likely it is the work that you are doing, and as you find happiness in that work, you find development. Remember that the shoemaker at his bench can develop spiritually just as much as the minister in the pulpit.

**Question**—I should like to know where I can secure the oil of wisdom for my lamp of knowledge?

**Answer**—In searching for knowledge you are securing the oil of wisdom. Never feel that the greatest knowledge is printed in books or written in letters or delivered from pulpits. It comes to the soul that searches for knowledge.

**Question**—I wonder if Mrs. Cook would come to our city and help us build up our church?

**Answer**—When you secure our booklet on organization, you will see how we are planning to help you and others build up your centers, societies and churches. Perhaps that booklet will reach you a considerable time before these answers are in your hands.

**Question**—Can I give my Oriental lessons to be read in our church, as I can not read them very well to others?

**Answer**—You may have the lessons read in your church if you wish. We should prefer to have passages from "God's World" read. But our book on organization gives you a definite procedure that we know will be very helpful to you.

**Question**—Please give me the right conditions to develop myself at home.

**Answer**—While you do not state whether you wish to develop your mediumistic powers or your spiritual understanding, we are assuming that it is the latter. Thirty minutes or an hour each evening given to quiet meditation upon the truths of spirit, or to earnest conversation with others who are interested, is a very helpful form of development.

**Question**—What is the reason for a person to feel downhearted and heavy, as if he were waiting for something or somebody?

**Answer**—This may be because you have very beautiful friendships on the other side and your spirit is longing to return to those companionships. Surely you have many who are waiting for you, and sometimes you feel this and you are desirous of being with them, even though you may not understand the reason for feeling as you do.

**Question**—Why is it that I can see so many faces of different people when I close my eyes? Sometimes I see just an eye or a hand.

**Answer**—Very likely you are developing clairvoyant sight, and you get only fleeting glimpses. Clairvoyant powers very often unfold in this way.

**Question**—At one time I saw a man sitting by the window, dressed in white. This was one Sunday afternoon. At another time I saw a pigeon, and it opened and closed its mouth as though it were talking to me. Can you explain these visions?

**Answer**—You very likely saw one of your guides—perhaps a higher guide. A vision of a bird usually denotes death, and this vision may have been given to you to impress upon you that somewhere, some relation or friend was about to pass into spirit or had already passed into spirit.

**Question**—I often see my mother, who has been in spirit over thirty years, walking with me or run-

ning after me. She never speaks. Is she not resting well?

**Answer**—Never fear that those in spirit go without rest. You have developed a mediumistic power that permits you to see, but you have not unfolded the power to hear. Seeing your mother as you do is certainly proof to you that she is very near you and is trying to help you.

**Question**—How much longer will my unhappy marriage last? I often pray to God to take me, as I am not afraid to die, and I know that I will be much happier.

**Answer**—You must never pray for God to terminate your earth-life. It was given to you as a privilege, and you must be thankful for it and for the experience that it brings you. You must always pray with the understanding that you are willing to abide by God's will, because you can never find happiness in any other way. To ask God to take you out of the flesh is the same as doubting God, and that is only closing the door against the possibility of happiness. Happiness is only the product of understanding.

**Question**—Why is it that the Jews do not believe in Jesus, and yet they are God's chosen people?

**Answer**—The Jews, in their orthodox belief, are still looking for the Messiah. God has no chosen people. We are all His children. It is true that the old Jewish writers claimed that they were God's chosen people, but if this were so, then it would prove that God shows favoritism. He can not love one more than another.

**Question**—Will there be an ending to this world or will it keep on as it is now?

**Answer**—Very likely many trillions of years were required in preparing the world as a habitation for mortal man. And it is perfectly reasonable to assert that mortals have lived in this world for millions of years, and probably this will be true for millions of years to come. Possibly, also, when this earth has undergone such changes that it is no longer possible for the habitation of human beings, another planet will be utilized to serve that purpose.

**Question**—Why is it that some people steal and never get caught, while others try once and are caught and punished?

**Answer**—Those who are caught the first time are the most fortunate. They are paying for their wrongdoing quickly. Those who continue to steal and are not caught, are only storing up accumulations, and the time must come when they will pay heavily.

**Question**—The Bible claims there is a devil, and spirits claim there is none. I do not understand.

**Answer**—All the claims in the Bible about the devil are allegorical, as a careful study of the Bible will prove. How can God be supreme if He had to share these honors with another being as powerful as He?

**Question**—The spirit teachers say that our souls are clean and pure, while the Bible says our souls are blackened with sins and we must suffer in the next world. Please explain.

**Answer**—We suffer through the law of compensation. If we attract suffering, then we suffer. But our souls are of God, and what we call sin is error. Suffering is only one form of learning, and when we have learned, we no longer suffer.

**Question**—Please tell me how I can face life's problems without complaint?

**Answer**—That is a form of development. Complaining becomes a habit. The man who drinks to excess feels that he must have his alcoholic beverages. When he has mastered this appetite for strong drink, he no longer feels the need of it. When we give way to the weakness of complaint, then it seems easier to complain. These are things that we must learn through personal effort, and the more effort we make, the greater strength our loved ones on the other side can bring to us.

**Question**—Why is it that some people gain wealth without seemingly trying, while others try hard every day and make only a plain living?

**Answer**—Those who succeed so easily in any line, be it making money or gaining fame, have earned that privilege some time in their lives—if not in this incarnation, then in some former incarnation or in spirit.

**Question**—Is it correct that our spirits leave our material-bodies every time we sleep?

**Answer**—This is true every time we have a long sleep. It might not be true of a nap. Only by entering the astral on an average of once every twenty-four hours do we gain the strength to continue our material experience.

**Question**—When the spirit leaves the body, as in sleep, does it attract energy only, or can it attract qualities of thought, both good and bad?

**Answer**—The individuality of the spirit does not change when it enters the astral, and it would seek those companionships that belong on the same plane. The spirit itself not only attracts energy, but it also accumulates ideas, according to its plane, and therefore some of these are progressive and others are not, depending entirely upon the person.

**Question**—Sex dreams would seem to indicate that we do not always go to a higher and purer world, but where there are still passions. Is this assumption correct?

**Answer**—Such dreams are not reflections of astral journeys. They are due to bodily conditions, and sometimes these are conditions of illness. These dreams come to us while our spirits are in our bodies and when we are just arousing to consciousness. These dreams do not always come just before we wake up, but at periods during the time when we approach the state of wakefulness, and perhaps again submerge into a dreamless sleep.

**Question**—Could a mother in spirit assist her daughter in the flesh by bringing that daughter into contact with a young man whom she might marry?

**Answer**—The law of attraction would help decide this question. If it is best for two people to marry, undoubtedly they will receive spirit assistance. This does not always mean a guarantee that they will be happy, but that they will secure certain experiences that both of them require in their development.

**Question**—I have had sittings with a very reputable medium, who has a control of high type, and this control says that there is no reincarnation.

**Answer**—We rarely have known of the teachings to come through control mediumship. The higher teachers would come through voice or materializing mediums. Most of these controls have been in spirit but a short time. It is a form of education for them. Their experience is limited. They do not remember their former earth lives, and they can give information only within the scope of their own experience and knowledge. Some highly developed control mediums attract higher spirits.

**Question**—Explain how prayers are heard, sifted and segregated.

**Answer**—Each soul is a reflection of God, and a prayer means that we send out vibrations that harmonize with the Creator. In other words, they open the door for us. But these prayers, while going direct to God, are also heard or sensed by our spirit friends, and as the prayers are pure and sincere, this enables our loved ones in spirit, who are God's Messengers, to bring help to us. But the insincere or unreasonable prayer does not attract assistance.

**Question**—Some years ago I was told that there was a dark man with me wherever I went, and about three years later, at midnight, I came face to face with an Egyptian, who seemed to be about twenty-five or thirty years of age. He did not speak, but suddenly vanished. Since then I have had flashes of light, rappings and many other peculiar manifestations. How do you explain this?

**Answer**—Very likely you came face to face with one of your Oriental guides. He gave you a vision of himself, and since then has been able to manifest his power more strongly. Those in spirit look youthful. Sometimes, of course, when they come to us, they duplicate the appearance of age for identification, but their normal state is one of youth.

**Question**—What is the best line of reading to follow daily so that a beginner can develop speedily?

**Answer**—Development is never speedy. It is a growth. Sometimes the greatest development seems to be the slowest because it is thorough. Contemplate much of the teachings that are given to you in "God's World" and in these lessons, because the more you think about them, the more they will open in your own mind inspirations of thought. Very often we are obliged to think about a thing many times before we really understand it.

**Question**—In "God's World," p. 12, paragraph 101, it is stated: "They must make themselves ready." Would it be asking too much for you to enlarge on this subject?

**Answer**—The full quotation is as follows: "People on a low plane do not want the conditions and truths of the higher plane, because they are not ready. They must make themselves ready. That is their task." If a person is satisfied to live in squalor, it is foolish to try to force that person to live in a palatial home where everything is clean and beautiful. Only as we desire to attain a certain stage of development, are we able to attain it. Nobody can take us and suddenly place us in a higher position of thought and development, because those are matters that pertain to our own growth. We begin by desiring, and as we desire, we inquire, we study, we learn. And that is the method of development.

**Question**—I do not seem to take much interest in the communication part of Spiritualism, but have an intense longing for the knowledge that lies beyond. Is this a natural state, and could you outline a simple course?

**Answer**—You have the right idea. Learn the philosophy. That is the object of "God's World" and these lessons. Study them and think about them. The desire for communication naturally comes strongest to those who have lost a dear one through the change called death. Too many people, however, have become so charmed with the phenomena of communication, they seem to forget the philosophy back of that ability of the spirit-world to communicate with us. It is through knowing that we progress, and knowledge is growth.

**Question**—Won't you please write a "Table-top"

volume enlarging on your idea of what constitutes natural law?

**Answer**—We have voluminous notes prepared at this time touching on this subject, dealing with "the nature of things" and also with the spirit-side of life. This "Table-top" volume will concern itself largely with those natural conditions that are known as matter, energy and ether. We know that this will prove a most interesting and absorbing topic. All of these volumes require a great deal of preparation and many conferences in the seance-room. For example, in writing "God's World," over two hundred special sittings were held for the purpose of discussing the teachings embodied in that volume. This was in addition to five years of Oriental Lessons that had been taken down in shorthand and transcribed. Each monthly lesson requires a great many sittings and many hours of discussion with the teachers.

**Question**—Are we to understand that there are no individual spirits in the spirit-world except first they have passed through this earth-plane?

**Answer**—The teachers refer to "individual experience" as beginning in the earth-plane. This does not mean that the spirits do not exist as individuals before they are born in the flesh, but they have never experienced the impediments and the obstacles of the flesh. They have seen and experienced only the ethereal. They have not come to this school-house. Consequently, their greatest development can not begin until they have passed through the experience of the earth-world.

**Question**—Does heredity have any bearing upon our disposition and talents? If not, what is the cause of family likenesses and traits?

**Answer**—Association and environment and the ever-present example of family traits must impress themselves upon the children, who will form similar habits. Also bear in mind that the law of attraction will bring together in families many spirits of like development—that what we call types will be attracted to like types—that the very fact of resemblance indicates the similarity. But, on the other hand, there are certain disease effects that are transmitted; that is, there are physical tendencies or physical weaknesses that are hereditary. And just as a mold will produce something that resembles it, often will there be a physical resemblance between members of families.

**Question**—Understanding that the individual always progresses, which do the teachers claim is the most advanced race of peoples: the white, yellow, brown, red or black; the Anglo-Saxons, Teutons, Latins, etc.?

**Answer**—We must remember, first of all, that in spirit they are all what we call white, and that the members of other races have come to this world for some special experience which they require. The teachers do not tell us that there is any national superiority, except that nations, like individuals, have experience, and the experience of a nation helps make the experience of an individual, and vice versa. The teachers consider the individual development without respect to the race or color. Therefore, when a person is highly developed, it is immaterial what his or her nationality may be. In every nation we find examples of every stage of development. If we attempt to classify the nations as collections of individuals, then we are overlooking the value of personal development. This we should never do.

**Question**—Would a person with some mediumistic power become stronger through coming into contact with a strong medium?

**Answer**—By coming into contact with the forces of the seance-room, our loved ones on the other side are able to get nearer to us. That experience enables us to open the door a little wider, and in that manner it is possible to progress more rapidly in the unfoldment of mediumistic powers.

**Question**—Who were Theon of Smyrna, Attila, Loyola and Savanarola? The other teachers you mention are familiar. Do any of the prophets of the Bible come as teachers to us?

**Answer**—Theon of Smyrna was a Greek mathematician and astronomer. He was the author of a work that dealt with mathematical rules for the study of Plato. Attila was the leader of the old Huns. Loyola was the founder of the Jesuits, and also the Knights Templar; strangely enough, the two orders that eventually combated one another! Savanarola was the noted Italian religious reformer. We have no direct evidence that any of the Biblical prophets, the Apostles or the Disciples, have come to us as teachers. But there are many whose identities we do not know. We know them only as "Truth," "Light," "Wisdom," "Protection," etc. We have been told at different times that some of the old prophets of Bible times have appeared in seances, but they have not appeared in our seances. The quality of the teachings that are brought to us by our teachers is very good evidence of the high development of those teachers. Mortals who lived in a big and active way naturally have pursued their tendencies to learn, to progress, after they have entered spirit. Perhaps many of those characters of Old Testament times have been reincarnated. Likely some of them have been very prominent figures in the later history of the world. We do not know that this is so, but we know that it is quite possible.

**Question**—Do the teachers tell us that a wave of Spiritualism will come to this earth in this generation, or is it the beginning of the second coming of Christ?

**Answer**—They tell us that the wave of Spiritualism has already come to this earth, that it will become more firmly established and will grow in force as time passes. They tell us that the second coming of Christ does not mean His appearance as an individual among us, but that it means the world will begin to feel the force of His spirit. Remarkable changes are occurring in the world at this time, and in a thousand years from now, mortals will look back upon these very days as comprising the very vital turning point in human affairs. We see changes, and while they are very rapid, they are also perfectly natural. And to us, often it does not occur that these vital changes are in actual process at this time.

**Question**—Do the teachers tell us that compensation comes to us in this world as well as in the next? When friends accuse us of imaginary faults and turn against us, are we ever compensated?

**Answer**—The law of compensation is operating always because it is the same force as the law of gravity or the law that gives us light from our sun. But the effect of that compensation may not become manifest for a long while. Those who accuse us unjustly are sending out the thought and it belongs to them, and in some manner it will come back to them and they will pay for it. But these accusations and these persecutions heaped upon us are very often like the furnace fires that are necessary to separate the pure gold from the gross materials of the ore.

**Question**—I asked my father in spirit if he would give me some information, and he replied, "My dear son, you are only a beginner in this work. Wait until you have been in the business for some time

and know more about it, and then I will tell you what you ought to know. Now don't ask any more foolish questions and you'll get no more foolish answers." What made him answer in such a way?

**Answer**—Getting this through writing, we are not sure that the message came from your father. It may have come from yourself. Remember that your own reflexes can play tricks on you, that there is such speed to thought that even a thought-flash passing through your brain might be telegraphed to your nerve-centers and deliver this thought as a message through the muscular action of your arm and hand. In studying mediumship and mediumistic manifestations, we must always take into account the human mind and nerve reaction. Unless we separate these from spiritualistic phenomena, we are likely to be plunged into a state of doubt and question.

**Question**—Last night, my little daughter, who is ten years old, and I sat at the table in a dark room. Several spirits came to us, one of them an uncle of mine who had been very religious. I offered a prayer for his development, and suddenly, a hand was placed upon our heads, and a voice came through the little medium's vocal chords, saying, "These are the hands of Jesus and He is giving you His blessing." How is that possible?

**Answer**—A message of this kind would more properly be interpreted as follows: "I, your uncle, wish to assure you that in your desire to learn more of the spirit-world, and to develop, I am bringing to you the blessings of the spirit-world. As a believer in Jesus, I assure you that you have His blessing for your efforts toward development." In other words, your little daughter, just developing, perhaps is not strong enough to bring a complete, long message, but as time passes she will develop in this manner. Pay more attention to this control mediumship than you do to your writings. Here you have a definite effort of the spirit-world to come through your daughter. Concentrate on her development. Where several members of a family are showing different forms of mediumistic development, it is only scattering the forces to sit first for one kind of development and then for another kind. Here you have something vastly more important than the writings.

**Question**—My two little daughters are showing several types of mediumistic powers and can see the spirits. They see them, too, when they are in bed. These spirits tell them that when they become stronger and older, they can produce materializations, and that this will not injure them any more than playing. What do you think about it?

**Answer**—This message is absolutely correct. But you must be careful not to confine these little girls too much to these sittings. Remember that their guides have to make certain changes in the chemistry of their bodies before they are mediums. Try to ascertain which form of mediumship each one seems to possess and arrange for sittings accordingly, not more than two a week and for not more than an hour at each sitting. If you attempt too many forms of mediumship at a time, the results will not be good and these girls would probably lose what they are starting to develop.

**Question**—Do Spiritualists purpose to organize later as a church? I mean with some center or official head.

**Answer**—You will receive from us shortly, a most interesting and helpful treatise on organization of centers. There are many organizations in existence at this time, but our object is to have each center independent, simply co-operating with the other centers. In certain matters, these various organizations can co-ordinate. But if Spiritualism grows

as one vast church organization, then it will be in danger of falling into orthodox channels and becoming as narrow and as intolerant as many other orthodox church organizations. Personal ambition might inspire us to make Spiritualism subservient to the Stead Center, but our desire to help the truth to the fullest impels us to urge and aid that form of organization that will not submerge the individual, and this is possible only through the establishment of independent centers and societies.

**Question**—Are the teachings of different spirits liable to differ? Are some of the lower spirits likely to make mistakes?

**Answer**—The teachings of spirits will differ the same as the teachings of mortals will differ. The students of more extended experience have greater knowledge. Sometimes spirits who have been on the other side but a short time, and to whom has not been restored the memory of the past; that is, prior to their earth existence, attempt to tell what they have observed. Naturally, they make mistakes. But every spirit is likely to make a mistake. God alone is infallible, and anything short of complete knowledge is liable to err.

**Question**—Is it wrong to be afraid of storms?

**Answer**—That is one form of fear. As we have more confidence in the spirit-world and in the goodness of God, we shall get away from fear of material things. This does not mean that we should throw all precaution away. We always should exercise diligence and judgment and do what lies within our power to protect ourselves. That is our duty. Fear of anything denotes some lack of spiritual understanding. The majority of people are afraid, which shows that the majority of humanity still lack a knowledge of spiritual things.

**Question**—I have passed through many dangers unhurt, apparently without conscious effort, where a little wrong step would have meant death. Is this due to my spirit guides? If so, how can I show my appreciation for this protection?

**Answer**—You can meditate upon what your guides have done for you and fill your heart and mind with thankfulness. Ask your loved ones on the other side to keep very close to you. Every person has proof of guidance if that person will just pause long enough to think of some of the dangers and mistakes he has escaped. But many of the dangers we have escaped are outside of our knowledge. We never know what dangers awaited us, because our guides have caused us to change our plans.

**Question**—I have had several dreams come to pass, some of them years after the dream occurred. Does this indicate that my guides are trying to show me my future?

**Answer**—Such dreams were memories of information that you received during astral trips, when likely you were permitted to study your own aura and could see various coming events concerned with your destiny. Your guides enabled you to remember these facts in the form of dreams.

**Question**—Do our guides sometimes help us and sometimes hinder us in a financial way?

**Answer**—We are passing through material experience and we can not ignore the material. We attract or repel success of any kind. Our guides will help us where they know the results will be beneficial for us. That benefit might be in teaching us a severe lesson that we are obliged to learn. Our guides also will sometimes aid in preventing success when they see that beyond that success lies something harmful that we have not attracted.

**Question**—What is permanent insanity?

**Answer**—In insanity, there is some material defect in the brain that prevents the even and uninterrupted flow of thought. The spirit, which is never insane or ill, withdraws from the body, but is still connected with that body, completing in the best way it can its material experience. The same thing occurs in fevers and the product we call delirium. It is not the spirit that is delirious, but it is the interrupted interpretation of the spirit-force that is obliged to operate through a deranged brain and nervous system.

**Question**—Some scientists claim that man has developed from the lower forms of life. Is this true?

**Answer**—We are taught that man has always been man—that he could not have been man in this flesh-and-blood world without being man in spirit—that if there were intermingling of the species, there would be no cumulative value of individual development. There is an evolution or a refinement, and as each individual in the world progresses, that really is assisting the development of the world. But the evolution goes on within the species and not through transmutation from one species to another.

**Question**—Being free agents, is it possible to change our temperaments? Can an impulsive man become a collected man?

**Answer**—We can change what we call our temperament through study, thought, effort. We can overcome bad tempers by practicing mastery over those tempers. It is through overcoming these faults that we develop. We must set ideals for ourselves, and try to follow those ideals. And each time we make a mistake, we must try to be stronger and overcome the tendency to that class of error.

**Question**—Please explain evil.

**Answer**—Evil is simply a wandering away from natural law. When we harmonize with natural law, we are normal and we have no desire to do that which is wrong. But when we break natural law, we are in a condition that might be called illness. Evil is simply the result of lack of harmony with God's Law. It is not a test, but it is a condition we bring upon ourselves through our ignorance.

**Question**—What is the meaning of the devil?

**Answer**—We think that the best definition that we can give is embodied in our "Table-Top" pamphlet, "Unmasking Fear." In that pamphlet we show that the devil is purely a product of fear and misunderstanding.

**Question**—Can men of different temperaments accomplish the same good, providing they have the same desire to do so, or does the nature of our temperaments produce varied results?

**Answer**—While writers on physiological and phrenological subjects have classified temperaments, and while astrology has attempted to prove that we can not escape our planetary conditions, the fact remains that we can all develop. People of vastly different types can attain the same goal. But according to their own understanding, they may select different routes. If we assume that we are handicapped by temperament, then we are giving in to a weakness and we are refusing to make the effort.

**Question**—In concentrating upon Spiritualism, do we not neglect other necessary thoughts? Our capacity of thought is limited. How can contemplation on Spiritualism help us in our daily work?

**Answer**—We must contemplate the subject of Spiritualism in a purely healthy and normal way. We must not throw aside all of our experience in this world, but we must try to see where these

truths apply to the things we do and to the thoughts we think. If we make Spiritualism something apart, if we do not take it into the weave of our lives and try to do our work better and try to be happier, then we are not getting the right value out of this philosophy.

**Question**—A friend thinks that mediums are the work of the devil, and points to St. Matthew 24:24: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insofar that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." How would you answer him?

**Answer**—Those people who quote the Bible never learn to read the Bible properly. For example, the book of Revelations foretells the coming of the power of commercialism. While that book is pictured in the language of the time in which it was written, nevertheless it deals very plainly and clearly with the all-powerful trade conditions that grip the world today. And so the world has built up its false leaders, its great politicians, its men who have attained material prominence, and the importance of the material has indeed deceived the elect. So long as people persist in talking about the devil and evil, what right have they to talk the supremacy of God? If there is one thing in the entire universe that God did not create, then God is not all-powerful, and if God is not all-powerful, then natural law is likely to have its exceptions. And once natural law ceases to operate in its immutable fashion, the universe must collapse.

**Question**—Would it be possible to get some impressions or a message from Mr. Stead at home, or would it be necessary to attend a seance at the Center?

**Answer**—Mr. Stead very often talks through different mediumistic forces, and like others in spirit, he will seize every opportunity of getting a helpful message through. Sometimes other spirits will bear messages for their friends on the other side, and will come with a message that perhaps would begin like this: "Mr. Stead wishes you to have this message."

**Question**—If one tries to get away from all wrongs and cultivates the habit of encouraging inspiring thoughts, will that benefit be carried into spirit to one's advantage and compensation?

**Answer**—It certainly will. Our experiences are not simply the things we go through, but they embrace our thoughts, our thought-habits. When we learn to search for the inspiring and ennobling thoughts, we are crowding out the harmful and inconsequential thoughts. And our power to think is something that we own. It is of the type of personal belongings that we take into spirit.

**Question**—Is it possible that after it is apparent that death has taken place, days may pass before the spirit leaves the body? If it is, in case of cremation would those on the spirit-side not have to work very quickly, and might they not injure the spirit?

**Answer**—The spirit can not be injured. The soul is not material, and after it has left the earth-body, the spirit-body is ready for it. What is called suspended animation may occur, which means that the spirit is really out of the earth-body but still connected with it. There have been cases where a person has returned to earth-life in the tomb, and the change of death is brought about by suffocation. Where there is suspended animation, and the body is cremated, death would follow very quickly.

**Question**—I read that a returned spirit told members of his family that cremation should not take place until seven days after death. What is your opinion?

**Answer**—When death has occurred, the spirit is no longer in the body. Cremation can take place at once. Death means that all connection with the earth-body has been severed. Many spirits newly arrived on the other side hear as many rumors about things as we hear.

**Question**—Sometimes after a person has mourned for a long while, a calm or reconciliation comes. Could this be caused by the passing of the one in spirit to a higher sphere, or through reincarnation, or is it a better understanding of God's law?

**Answer**—When a person has decided to become reconciled to the passing of a loved one to the other side, it is due partly to the success of the efforts of that loved one to impress the earth-person with the feeling that all is well. It is also due in part to a relief of the nerve tension caused by excessive grief. Time is the great healer.

**Question**—If one knew the name of a guide, could one talk to that guide?

**Answer**—Even though we may not know the names of a good many of our guides, we can at least talk to them mentally. We can think about them and they get our thoughts and understand.

**Question**—In case an infant is adopted, and dies at the age of six, which parents will he recognize when he is in spirit?

**Answer**—He will be told who his real parents are. But that child would have just as much love for his foster-parents as though they were his real parents.

**Question**—Do our spirit friends see us grieving for them? Can they be happy under those conditions?

**Answer**—They would not be as happy as though we understood. But, on the other hand, only by acquiring happiness can they bring happiness and better understanding to us.

**Question**—My little boy passed into spirit-life. Can he be happy without his parents?

**Answer**—He will be very near his parents and try to make them happy. He will be educated, and taken care of, and given an opportunity of preparing a place for his parents when they come.

**Question**—Please explain reincarnation. Do you mean to say that we live on earth more than once?

**Answer**—A great many people resent the idea of reincarnation. They forget that in spirit we must live under freer and better conditions, and that the experience we receive in the earth-world has great value in our everlasting development and progress. In many seances, spirits who have but little experience on the other side will disclaim reincarnation. The older spirits, who are teachers, say that there is reincarnation, because they can remember several spans of life on earth. We come here until we have finished the particular education for which we were sent. And when that development has been completed, then the reason for our return has been removed. Older spirits on the other side look forward to another opportunity of living in the flesh, because it will afford them the means of bringing to the earth something new and something good to aid humanity.

**Question**—Do you think any person is ever conscious when passing through death?

**Answer**—Some persons undoubtedly are conscious most of the time. Mr. Stead says that there were not five seconds that he could not account for in his passing. Others sink into unconsciousness for hours or days or even weeks. A person killed by an explosion might really have no period of unconsciousness, and probably would not realize until later that a change had taken place.

**Question**—How is it that many reliable mediums declare there is no reincarnation?

**Answer**—If you wish to localize seance-room experience to America, there are many seances where reincarnation is refuted. Information coming through in nearly all other parts of the world declares reincarnation to be a fact. When the teachers come with their messages of truth, is it likely that they would be truthful in all their statements but one? The American mind naturally rejects the idea of reincarnation because the Americans have a conception of speed in business, art and everything, and they feel that they have the right of independence of thought and can select their future state as well as they can their success on the stock-market. Let us remember that all countries started out in much the same way. Time was when Babylon had as much "get-up," spice and sparkle as New York City. As countries grow older, and their citizens realize that everything is not accomplished in a day, the trend of philosophical thought changes and there is less tendency to reject such ideas as reincarnation. In His teachings, Christ repeatedly stated that the kingdom of heaven could not be attained until people were born again. And He also referred to a natural body and a spiritual body. The people in His time recognized reincarnation, and they asked Him if He was not Elijah. Students who have been in many parts of the world often have expressed their surprise that reincarnation should be rejected in America. However, it makes no difference whether we believe or disbelieve the idea of reincarnation. If it is objectionable, pass it by, because our opinion one way or another can not change the facts. Whatever the facts are must decide our own progress. There are many on the other side who do not believe in reincarnation and who regard it as abhorrent. But those spirits are residents of the lower spheres.

**Question**—Has Andrew Jackson Davis manifested in your circle, and in what way?

**Answer**—Andrew Jackson Davis manifests frequently in our circle as a teacher. He assisted very materially in the work on "God's World."

**Question**—Has the Swami Vivekananda manifested or spoken in your circle, and on what subject?

**Answer**—The Swami Vivekananda has often spoken in our circle as a teacher. He is an old spirit, and upon passing from the flesh, went immediately to one of the higher spheres, either the fifth or the sixth.

**Question**—By calling on Davis and Vivekananda in your circle, will they both give something for me?

**Answer**—When these spirits manifest in our circles, they come only as teachers, and not with personal messages. Your presence in the circle undoubtedly would bring the messages you expect. But when we are there to receive the teachings, we get the teachings only.

**Question**—What do the teachers in spirit say about birth-control?

**Answer**—They say that sex never changes, that the mother attracts spirits as her children, but that if the unborn child is to be a boy, it will be a boy in spite of all efforts to the contrary.

**Question**—What do the teachers in spirit tell us about our eugenic laws?

**Answer**—Like any other laws that attempt to govern communities, they serve their purpose. Consequently, if diseased persons are prohibited from marrying, there would be less idiocy and disease among offspring. Eugenic laws, like many other laws, are attempts to offset the ignorance of man-

kind. As knowledge increases, and only as the world develops spiritually, such laws would become obsolete because they would no longer be needed. But this is looking a great distance into the future.

**Question**—Are marriages ever a mistake? Are they always a beneficial experience?

**Answer**—The contracting parties naturally extract experience out of their union. Anything that mortals do is likely to result in error.

**Question**—Are all wrong-doings for the eventual benefit of those who do wrong?

**Answer**—They are the lesson that undeveloped people attract to themselves, and through those lessons they begin to develop—if not at once, at least later on.

**Question**—Are there many Jewish people who are Spiritualists?

**Answer**—A great many Jewish people are Spiritualists. We find Spiritualists among all races, nations and types of people.

**Question**—What should be our attitude toward a person who has committed a wilful crime and who now lives as nearly upright as he knows how?

**Answer**—We should always give every person a chance. It is not our right to punish or heap condemnation upon any person.

**Question**—Were it not for the chapter, "Christian Science versus Spiritualism," could not the Christian Science text-book be considered good Spiritualistic doctrine?

**Answer**—Every religious doctrine could be considered good Spiritualistic doctrine. Remove from religion the idea of the continuity of life and the goodness of God, and what is left? Spiritualism is nothing but direct evidence of the truths upon which all religion is founded.

**Question**—Can you inform me is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has succeeded in communicating with his son who was killed in battle?

**Answer**—We have seen no account, but in view of the fact that Sir Arthur is intensely interested in Spiritualism, and there are many mediums in England, it is likely that he has received the desired communication.

**Question**—Can spirits materialize at a materializing seance even if they have to be reincarnated again?

**Answer**—They could materialize without respect to whether they will be reincarnated or not. There are records where the spirits of sleeping persons have materialized.

**Question**—My husband will go to bed, and call the spirits, and they start to manifest from his feet up to his face. What kind of development would you call this?

**Answer**—Your husband undoubtedly is becoming sensitive to the presence of his loved ones on the other side. The manifestations come in so many ways, it would be difficult to classify the development indicated.

**Question**—When we sit at our table for tippings, it always tips towards me. Could I get messages for my friends? Is table-tipping a gift or can it be developed?

**Answer**—It would be a good idea to try to get messages for friends and see what the results amount to. Many people have some form of mediumship, and they can discover it only through sitting for some kind of development. Table-tippings are among the easiest manifestations to secure.

**Question**—If one has bad eyesight, will that defect continue in spirit?

**Answer**—No physical defect continues in spirit.

**Question**—If, when we are in the astral in our sleep, we see those who have passed into spirit, how is it possible to also see those who are still in the flesh?

**Answer**—Those who still belong to this world like you are in the astral. You may remember seeing them when you awaken, but they may not recall seeing you. They may remember nothing about their astral journey.

**Question**—Do we really see and talk to our loved ones in spirit when we dream that we do?

**Answer**—If the dream is vivid, undoubtedly it is a memory of an astral trip, and we have been with and talked with our loved ones on the other side.

**Question**—Why do people say, "When I am in spirit, I hope I shall never have to return to the flesh"?

**Answer**—Because they feel that their experiences in the earth-world have been very harsh. They do not know how they will feel when they enter spirit. They will live under different conditions and will see everything in a broader and clearer way.

**Question**—Do all spirits reach Homeland before they are reincarnated?

**Answer**—All except those who are of low development. Some never get beyond the first spirit-sphere before being reincarnated. That reincarnation would come as a blessing, because perhaps such individuals are filled with hopeless memories. Reincarnation gives them another start under better conditions.

**Question**—What is meant by the evil spirit from God spoken of in the Scriptures?

**Answer**—If God did not create everything, then there might be evil spirits. The reference to evil spirits in the Bible unquestionably means the undeveloped spirits in the lower spirit-spheres. They are evil only while they continue to do evil. When they develop, they cease being evil. Consequently, the term "evil" often is misunderstood. Our teachers tell us that there is no source of evil, that the condition we know as evil is simply indicative that individuals have wandered away from God's law.

**Question**—Of what use are animals in Spiritland?

**Answer**—In the Homeland they are sometimes retained for long periods as pets. But the purpose of animal-life is associated with the earth-plane.

**Question**—Do those in spirit have any manual labor to do?

**Answer**—In the lower spirit-spheres, the residents must labor, but it differs somewhat from our conception of labor. Nevertheless, it is work; that is, what we might call physical work. Only as the spirit develops does the work become exclusively spiritual.

**Question**—In "God's World" you state that those in spirit eat fruit. In "Raymond" it is stated that those in spirit do not eat and do not care to eat. Which is correct?

**Answer**—When Raymond brought his message to his father, he had been in spirit but a short time. Many of our teachers have been in spirit for centuries. Raymond, however, said that he saw people eat—that what they ate looked like the food that is served in this world.

**Question**—Why do women have it so much harder on earth than men? Why are women never mentioned as teachers?

**Answer**—We receive teachings from women, including Queen Elizabeth, Queen Louise and others whose identities we do not know. A woman's lot is hard on the earth-plane only because mortals are still ignorant. A woman's lot is not nearly as difficult now as it has been in the past.

**Question**—In "Raymond" it is stated that rank and title are acquired by virtue. Explain this, please.

**Answer**—Rank and title in spirit, as used by Raymond, mean stages of development, and not such rank and title as we know in this world.

**Question**—Is there any danger of a person's losing his mind through studying too deeply about the subject of Spiritualism?

**Answer**—The person who really studies deeply sees in our form of life, our sky, our scenery, our cities and our happiness, just as much of God's work as exists on the other side. Only by contemplating the mystery of life beyond the grave could one's health be endangered. When we see it as perfectly natural, we can carry no nerve-strain or anxiety.

**Question**—Why should a spirit tell you an untruth and interfere with your home-life and almost break up your home?

**Answer**—We do not believe that a spirit would wilfully tell an untruth. But the conditions or forces through which spirits communicate sometimes prevent them from saying that which they intended to say. The forces of a seance-room may be so agitated that this disturbance is felt by the communicating spirits. Therefore, communication must take into consideration the nature and condition of the forces.

**Question**—One night, after retiring, I heard a voice say plainly, "Wait, don't move until after the twentieth or the twenty-fifth." I waited, and two wonderful events happened on those dates. I am sure that it was the voice of my son who was killed in France.

**Answer**—Undoubtedly you are correct. The fact that these dates were spoken, and proved to be important when they arrived, showed that this was not a coincidence, but direct communication.

**Question**—Sometimes I see one, and then again four, bright lights. Are they caused by spirits?

**Answer**—Unquestionably you are seeing the lights of loved ones on the other side. You must be very psychic. If you were more clairvoyant, you would see the forms instead of the lights.

**Question**—My nephew, in a vision, brought a message about an old book that belonged to my mother. What did this mean?

**Answer**—It may have come as a test. If you try to remember, you may recall some conversation with your mother relative to that book.

**Question**—As I was treating my husband's head, he suddenly saw a golden light rise from the head of my bed and pass away. What does it mean?

**Answer**—Probably it was the light given out by some loved one on the other side.

**Question**—Is prayer the only power that will strengthen mediumship?

**Answer**—It is not. Sitting regularly for development and being patient will help produce the conditions necessary for that unfoldment.

**Question**—Do people have to be baptized before they can attain that which God placed them on earth to do?

**Answer**—Baptism is merely a form. The simple process of baptizing can not make you more or less a child of God than you were before.

**Question**—While sleeping one evening, I felt something snatch at my leg. I did not feel well at the time. What is the meaning of this?

**Answer**—You may have felt one of your loved ones on the other side who was trying to heal you, and chanced to touch you so that you could sense that touch.

**Question**—My mother passed over seven months ago, and she comes to me in my dreams and tells me what to do. Must I obey her?

**Answer**—You must be sure that your dream is not only a dream. If you could have direct communication with your mother, you would soon find out whether the messages received in your dreams were correct.

**Question**—What is the interpretation of the following verse in the Bible: "The living know they shall die, but the dead know nothing more, neither have they a reward any more, for the memory of them is forgotten."

**Answer**—The living on earth know that they must pass through the change called death. They continue to live, but their bodies cease to have knowledge or memory. Their personalities on earth are rewarded for the duration of time they live in their earth-bodies. After the earth-work is done, their records as mortals gradually fade and are forgotten.

**Question**—I was confined to my room with a slight illness, and I spent much of my time reading "God's World." A short candle was removed from the stick that day, and a long candle, which was concealed in a dresser drawer, was placed in the candlestick. This occurred three months ago, but the short candle has never been located.

**Answer**—Physical phenomena of this kind are really common, and by putting yourself in harmony with the spirit-world, you may have supplied sufficient forces for a manifestation of this kind.

**Question**—A medium told me that my mother in spirit gave her a message about something that was to happen to me. Can I rely on such information?

**Answer**—Messages of this kind sometimes represent opinions. Those on the other side express their opinions, and sometimes they can foretell events, but only when they know that such prophecy is advisable and helpful.

**Question**—Having no friends to sit with me for development, can I obtain results sitting alone?

**Answer**—You may sit alone, and you might develop much faster than by having persons sitting with you who are not fully in accord with this truth.

**Question**—What is spiritual development?

**Answer**—Literally, spiritual development means the unfolding of spiritual qualities. A person might develop mediumship and receive manifestations without any of those qualities that we call spiritual. Therefore, there is a great deal of confusion in the use of the word. Some persons are so constituted physically that they may develop psychic powers, and yet have a small conception of the things we know as spiritual. On the other side, spiritual development means earning one's way to the higher spheres, where there is greater understanding.

**Question**—What is meant by the following verse: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling"?

**Answer**—Try to be in harmony with those things

that are spiritual. While your spirit is in the earth-body, you are still a spirit, and if you adhere to the spiritual things and love peace and harmony, you will make corresponding progress when you are called into the land of spirit.

**Question**—What spirit does the following verse have reference to: "Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil"?

**Answer**—Christ spent much time in contemplation and counsel with his higher guides. Like all those who pass this way, He had to be tested, and a test is usually referred to in the Bible as a temptation. Christ was sorely distressed. He worked against heavy odds. And the idea must have come to Him occasionally that it would be easier to live the way of the earth, than to arouse the wrath of the multitude by telling them they were selfish and material and wrong.

**Question**—I sit in my home about two hours each Monday and Friday evening, and I have experienced nothing unusual as yet. Am I being benefited?

**Answer**—Development may proceed without manifestations, and again manifestations may come unexpectedly. Do not feel discouraged, because during these hours you are putting yourself in harmony with the spirit-forces. Often we are benefited without realizing the nature of that benefit at the time.

**Question**—Do we always have the same guides, or do they sometimes change?

**Answer**—Some guides we have with us throughout our earth-lives, and others come for special purposes, and when those purposes have been fulfilled, they leave us.

**Question**—In reincarnation, do we look the same in stature and features?

**Answer**—We look much the same. However, the person who was a dwarf might be reincarnated in a body that would grow to full dimensions. There is a similarity in the features.

**Question**—Have mediums the power to do evil as well as good?

**Answer**—Only to the same extent that any mortal has. But the law of compensation operates with mediums the same as it does with the rest of us.

**Question**—Are we not all victims of circumstance and environment? Is there any such thing as will-power in this world?

**Answer**—Environment naturally affects us a great deal. It is responsible for the majority of bad social conditions. We attract most of the events we call circumstance, but we attract those conditions not as a punishment so much as necessary changes in our own development and destiny. We exercise will-power in making our decisions. Very often when we think that it is our will that directs us, the compelling force is the help of some guide.

**Question**—In reincarnation, is any choice given to the individual about to pass through that change?

**Answer**—The individual in spirit earns his way in the matter of reincarnation, just as we in this world earn our way in the matter of progress in spirit. The more highly developed spirits know when their next reincarnation will be, what their names will be and what conditions of life they will pass through. Consequently, it may be said that many in spirit are given a voice in the matter of their reincarnation.

**Question**—Would it be wise to try to obtain from the spirit-world, the processes by which we can build up from ether and energy those things so necessary in human existence?

**Answer**—It would not be wise to be in position to build up those things as they would be built up in spirit, because that would rob us of much of our necessary experience. Chemistry is a counterpart of the spirit processes that utilize materials and forces, and chemistry is the power that is used by those on the other side in building up different things from the ethereal substance and force.

**Question**—For years a spirit has tried to control me, but has never succeeded beyond getting through a few words. What is the reason?

**Answer**—You may not have been sitting regularly for development, and you may unconsciously have been combating the efforts of your control.

**Question**—In sitting for table-tippings, should the room be darkened? Can one alone secure results? Should there be more than two?

**Answer**—A darkened room is more likely to bring results, but sometimes a room partly darkened is just as good. One person may secure results, but it might take two, three or four, or as many as can sit around the table conveniently.

**Question**—What is the state of being in a trance? Can one learn to enter into a trance and wake up from it at will?

**Answer**—A state of trance means control, and a person returns from it when the control has left. It is necessary to sit for development and to give up to the control when that spirit seeks to gain possession.

**Question**—Has telepathy between persons in the flesh any connection with the spirit-world? How can one cultivate telepathy?

**Answer**—Telepathy is what might be called the soul-language. It can be developed by persons in the flesh. That development really is a form of mediumship, and the messages are transmitted by those in spirit. It would be possible for the message to pass direct between persons in the flesh, but ordinarily it is accomplished in the manner above explained.

**Question**—Is light eventually extinguished in its travels through space?

**Answer**—Light may be transmuted into other forms of energy, and in its travel may be lost so far as its identity as light is concerned. Also, certain rays of light can be restricted in their travels; while higher vibrations, that would be recognized as light by those in spirit, would continue over much greater distances. The vibration of light after trillions of miles of travel may be so feeble that it would not be recognized by our sense of sight, and yet it might be recorded through photography by a large reflecting or refracting telescope.

**Question**—Describe the nature of the cataclysm that caused the blaze-up in the new star, Perseus, in 1901.

**Answer**—New suns and solar systems, in the process of formation, are gases in almost constant states of eruption. And at periods in their process of solidifying, combustion would be much more intense than it would be at other times. This combustion is not only a burning, as we understand it, but it is also a violent exhibition of energy.

**Question**—You state that Spiritualism denies the Darwinian theory. How can you reconcile this with what geology proves?

**Answer**—The fossil remains that have been revealed by excavations and mining have never given any tangible evidence of the transmutation of the species. These fossils have shown many forms that

are now extinct, but which are related to forms of the same class that we still find on earth.

**Question**—Why did God not leave such absolute proof of His existence that there can be no room in us mortals for atheism?

**Answer**—Recognition of the great Creative Force is present in every form and force. The atheist is simply passing through a period of his development that likely is necessary. Neither our denial nor our affirmation can change things as they are. The atheist denies God, but places all of his belief in Nature; and therefore, in his admiration of Nature, he is admitting the existence of the same great Creative Force, no matter what name he attaches to it.

**Question**—Do animals have souls? If this is true, how do you account for the fact that the egg of the starfish can be artificially fertilized?

**Answer**—All life is everlasting. While the egg of the starfish may be fertilized artificially, that fertilization simply means supplying the conditions necessary for the expression of the life-principle that already is in the egg. Female mammals have been fertilized without actual contact with the male of their species.

#### TEN SELF-EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

DO NOT send your answers to the following questions. They are self-starters intended solely for your own benefit. The references are of paragraph and page numbers in "God's World."

1. How would you answer a claim that mediumship is wrong? 46-45.
2. Why should there be a physical body; why would the spirit-body not do as well for this world? 2-47.
3. Name some particulars in which the spirit-body differs from the material-body. 10-49.
4. Why do spirits have different experiences to relate relative to the change called death? 30-54.
5. Upon what fact rests the theory that there are evil spirits? 35-62.
6. Would it be helpful to us if we mortals could see and hear our loved ones in spirit continuously? 54-65.
7. Why should we not wish to be in spirit before our time for going has arrived? 73-69.
8. What relationship does illness bear to natural law? 7-71.
9. What would you say to a person who states that communication is disobedience of God's law? 15-73.
10. Does nature really make mistakes? 21-75.

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